



Felice D. Gaer directs the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights of the American Jewish Committee, which conducts research and advocacy to strengthen international human rights protections and institutions worldwide.

Gaer was 2010 Regents Professor at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). She was and remains the first American to serve as an Independent Expert on the UN Committee against Torture, a body which monitors compliance of 146 countries with the Convention against Torture. Ms. Gaer has been a member of the Committee since she was nominated by the Clinton Administration in 1999, and has been elected to three terms on it, serving as Vice Chair (2004-2006), as General Rapporteur (2006-2008), and as year-round Rapporteur on Follow-up to Country Conclusions (2003 to present).

In 2010, Gaer was awarded the National Religious Freedom award by the First Freedom Center in Richmond, Virginia. Encyclopedia Judaica describes Ms. Gaer as having “played the key role in assuring passage by consensus of the UN General Assembly's first-ever condemnation of anti-Semitism” in 1998, and being an “architect of many initiatives linking women's rights to human rights.”

Ms. Gaer writes and lectures widely on U.S. and UN human rights policy, addressing issues including protecting civilians under threat, advancing the human rights of women, eradicating religious persecution abroad, resolving ethnic conflicts, and preventing genocide. One of the first to call for the issue of rape in armed conflicts to be addressed by the international war crimes tribunal on former Yugoslavia, she was a key negotiator on the U.S. delegation to the Beijing World Conference on Women. Two recent articles on freedom of religion and human rights include “Echoes of the Future? Religious Repression as a Challenge to US Human Rights Policy” in the volume, *The Future of Human Rights: US Policy for a New Era* (U. of Penn. Press, 2008), and “Religious Freedom,” in the *Encyclopedia of Human Rights*, (Oxford Univ. Press, 2009).

In 2009, the Obama Administration asked Ms. Gaer to serve on a delegation to the UN in Geneva to assess the Durban Review Conference negotiations, and to be a delegate to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Ms. Gaer was a public member of nine U.S. delegations to UN human rights negotiations, including the Commission on Human Rights and the Beijing World Conference on Women in the 1990s. More recently, she served on several OSCE delegations in her capacity as Chair and Vice Chair of the U.S. Commission.

A member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Ms. Gaer serves on the advisory committee of Human Rights Watch/Europe and Central Asia. She is a member of the board of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation and the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute. In 2002 and 2003 she was cited in the annual Forward 50 list of Jewish Americans who are making a difference.

Ms. Gaer is a graduate of Wellesley College, from which she received the Alumni Achievement Award in 1995. She also received advanced degrees from Columbia University.

Ms. Gaer, who has served on the Commission since 2001, including three times as Chair, three times as Vice Chair, and one time on the Executive Committee, was appointed by Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.). Ms. Gaer was reappointed by President Barack Obama in June 2010.